

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, SF
SUBJECT: PAC TERRORISM TRIAL

REF: PRETORIA 2020 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE STATE IS STILL CALLING WITNESSES AT THE "IN CAMERA"
TERRORISM ACT TRIAL OF 18 ALLEGED PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS
(PAC) MEMBERS AT BETHAL (TRANSVAAL). ACCORDING TO SPOT
PRESS REPORTS, VARIOUS WITNESSES HAVE TESTIFIED THAT THEY
RECEIVED MILITARY TRAINING WITH SOME OF THE ACCUSED AT A
PAC BASE IN LIBYA AND WERE SENT THERE VIA BOTSWANA, TANZANIA,
UGANDA, EGYPT, AND THE SUDAN. ONE WITNESS CLAIMED THAT
WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT ENTEBBE AIRPORT, THE UGANDAN FOREIGN
MINISTER WAS WAITING AND DROVE THEM TO THEIR HOTEL IN
KAMPALA. WITNESSES TOLD THE COURT THAT THEY WERE MET IN
LIBYA BY VICTOR MAYEKISO, PAC REPRESENTATIVE, AND
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JOINED 200 OTHERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND THAILAND FOR
MILITARY TRAINING AT A BASE NEAR BENGHAZI. OTHER WITNESSES
TESTIFIED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN WERE SENT TO CHINA FOR
TRAINING AS NURSES.

2. BETHAL PROCEEDINGS HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO CONSTANT
DISRUPTION DURING THE PAST MONTH. IN EARLY MAY, JUSTICE

CURLEWIS ASKED DEPUTY ATTORNEY-GENERAL HAASBROEK TO INVESTIGATE WHY THE POLICE RAIDED THE BETHAL MOTEL ROOM OF A JOURNALIST WORKING FOR AN AFRIKAANS NEWSPAPER. ALTHOUGH NOT EXPLAINED PUBLICLY, HAASBROEK SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD CURLEWIS THERE HAD BEEN A "MISUNDERSTANDING" AND CURLEWIS AGREED THE POLICE DID NOT HAVE "ALL THE FACTS." LATER IN THE MONTH, ONE OF THE ACCUSED SHOUTED, "THE BOY IS LYING DELIBERATELY. THE JUDGE IS UNJUST. THIS IS NO COURT", AT A STATE WITNESS AND THE COURT WAS ADJOURNED AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEFENSE, TO ALLOW A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF THE ACCUSED. ON MAY 29, THE SAME ACCUSED WAS AGAIN REMOVED FROM COURT AFTER A SECOND OUTBURST. FINALLY, JUSTICE CURLEWIS REFUSED TO CONTINUE THE PROCEEDINGS BECAUSE THE BUILDING WAS NOT HEATED. HE SAID HE WAS TOO COLD, HAD DIFFICULTY WRITING, AND WOULD NOT TAKE FURTHER ABUSE FROM "BUREAUCRATS." ACCORDING TO LATEST PRESS REPORTS, CURLEWIS RECEIVED HIS HEATERS.

3. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY SOURCES, THE 18 PAC ACCUSED ARE HAVING CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY WITH THEIR DEFENSE LAWYERS. ALL OF THE 18 CANNOT AGREE ON WHO SHOULD REPRESENT THEM AND THIS APPARENTLY EXPLAINS ADVOCATE COOPER'S SUDDEN DEPARTURE FROM THE CASE AND REPEATED CALLS FROM SOME OF THE ACCUSED FOR A DIFFERENT ATTORNEY.

4. COMMENT: BETWEEN CURLEWIS' ANTICS AND CONFUSION
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AMONG THE ACCUSED, THE BETHAL TRIAL MAY WELL DRAG ON UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR OR LONGER.
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